

# Case Studies of Rajasthan - Mine Labour Protection Campaign

## Case Study 1: The Enduring Shadow of Silicosis – Munni Bai's Story

In the dust-laden village of Bhudpura, Munni Bai lives a life irrevocably shaped by the sandstone mines of Bundi. The mines, while providing a precarious livelihood, have also been a harbinger of profound loss. Munni Bai is a widow, her husband Ram Charan a certified victim of silicosis, a cruel lung disease born from the silica-rich dust he inhaled day after day. Though a government compensation of 1 lac rupees was received after his certified illness – a sum meant to cushion the blow – it was but a temporary reprieve for a family caught in a devastating cycle.

Tragedy, relentless in its pursuit, soon revisited Munni Bai. Her elder son, Raju, stepped into his father's footsteps to support the struggling family, only to succumb to the same insidious ailment. His death, however, remained uncertified, dismissed tragically as tuberculosis, denying his young widow and two small children the official acknowledgment and aid that might have followed. As if this burden of grief were not enough, Munni Bai also endured the loss of her daughter to an unspecified illness.

The weight of responsibility then fell on her second son. He too ventured into the mines, the only path he knew to provide for his own wife and two daughters. But his tenure was cut short by a debilitating accident that left his left side paralyzed, rendering him incapable of any work.

Today, Munni Bai's home shelters two grieving widows – herself and her daughter-in-law – a man incapacitated in his prime, and three young children whose futures hang precariously in the balance. Six lives are now dependent on Munni Bai, a woman who has weathered three heartbreaking deaths and now faces the monumental task of nurturing her fractured family amidst overwhelming adversity. Their story is a stark testament to the cascading impact of occupational hazards, where one tragedy begets another, leaving a legacy of hardship and urgent need.

## Case Study 2: A Fight for Breath and Justice – Prem Bai's Story

Prem Bai, another resident of a mining community, carries the double burden of grief and her own failing health. Her husband, lost to silicosis, was never officially certified, a bureaucratic oversight that erased his suffering from official records and denied his family due compensation. Now, Prem Bai herself battles the same relentless disease. Certified with silicosis in [Bhilwara](#), a flicker of hope for assistance was ignited, only to be cruelly extinguished.

Within a year, her claim for compensation was rejected, a casualty of shifting administrative sands – the transition between online and offline registration systems. The promised support, including a modest pension of 1500 rupees that could have offered a sliver of stability, never materialized.

The consequences of this systemic failure are borne heavily by her children. Forced by dire circumstances, Prem Bai had to make an unthinkable choice: her elder son, a bright eighth-grade student, was pulled from school. At an age when he should be engrossed in books and dreams, he is now a school dropout, his labor in the mines a grim necessity to keep hunger at bay. Her younger son, still in the sixth grade, attempts to balance his education with sporadic work in the very mines that are consuming his mother and stole his father. The fragile hope of this family tragically rests on the tender shoulders of a thirteen-year-old boy, thrust into the role of provider far too soon. Prem Bai's struggle is not just against a debilitating illness, but against a system that failed to protect her and now threatens to steal her children's future.